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QUALITY

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What Can You Do to Help Reduce Air Pollution?

On the Road

Drive less. This is the single most effective way to reduce vehicle emissions.

- Ride the bus, carpool, share trips, walk, bike, or use some other form of alternative transportation whenever possible.
- Reduce commuting time. Choose to live close to your work.
- Combine trips to the same areas. Once you arrive, park your car and walk between destinations.

Drive wisely

- Avoid carrying unneeded items. Each extra 100 pounds increases gas consumption by 4%.
- Place items inside vehicle instead of on roof racks. Remove roof racks when not in use. The wind drag from a rack increases gas consumption by almost one mile per gallon.
- Drive at a medium and steady speed. Most cars get the best gas mileage at between 35 and 45 miles per hour.
- Use the air conditioner only when necessary. Air conditioners can reduce gas mileage by 20%.
- Avoid long idles at drive-up windows or when waiting. Restarting a warm engine takes less fuel than letting it run for just 30 seconds.

Maintain your car.

- Get regular tune-ups. Vehicles with worn spark plugs or clogged fuel or air filters do not run efficiently and emit more pollution.
- Keep tires properly inflated and wheels aligned to reduce tire drag on the road. Gas mileage drops 1% for every pound of tire pressure below the recommended level.
- Don't top off the gas tank. Topping off allows harmful chemicals to escape into the air.

At Home

- Avoid using gas-powered hand tools. Operating a gas-powered lawn mower for one hour produces as much pollution as driving a car 50 miles.
- Consider replacing your mower with an old-fashioned push mower. Electric mowers or new, more efficient gas mowers are other alternatives.
- Reduce burning. Wood burning and open burning of weeds and land clearing create small particles in the air, carbon monoxide, and even toxic chemicals.
- Convert from wood to gas or electric heat, or get a clean-burning fireplace insert.
- Find safer ways to remove weeds or fire hazards and clear land.
- Never burn man-made refuse. It is not only illegal, but the toxic smoke created can be dangerous.
- Comply with air quality advisories and burn bans.